



Kemball School

"We can because we try"



Attendance Policy 2024

Last reviewed September 2024

Kemball School is committed to raising the achievement and aspirations of all pupils. One of the ways in which we do this is by promoting good attendance and punctuality

Kemball School recognises that regular attendance at school is a legal requirement and will ensure that all unnecessary absences are challenged and, where appropriate, not authorised. Effective strategies will be put in place to ensure that all pupils achieve the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality, ensuring that any factors that may limit full attendance are identified and acted upon swiftly.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2024'
- DfE (2024) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Working Together to Improve Attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'

Roles and Responsibilities:

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate information regarding attendance

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the Senior Attendance Champion role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

The Senior Attendance Champion (Helen Smith) is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Tracking contact information on Behaviour Watch
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Leading a compassionate approach when listening to parents and pupils regarding barriers to attendance.
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Enforcing attendance through statutory interventions in cases of persistent poor attendance where other supports have not succeeded.
- When an individual pupil's attendance level falls below 90% in any term **without good reason**, the school sends out attendance letters and will invite parents/carers in to attend a meeting to discuss their child's attendance

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office
- Liaising with parents/carers. When pupils have had 5 consecutive days off school, teachers will ring parents/carers to further investigate the absence and discuss

plans for a return to school. All correspondence will be recorded on the attendance tab on Behaviour Watch

The school attendance co-ordinator (Jo Mandley) is responsible for:

- Monitoring the day to day attendance data
- First day calling
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Certificates for pupils with good attendance
- Regular attendance letters for parents that highlight pupils' percentage attendance
- Liaising with Senior Attendance Champion with regards to attendance clinics

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.
- Following any support provided by the school to improve attendance.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change, including the other emergency contact numbers.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Proactively engaging with any attendance support offered by the school and the LA.
- Notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around school where possible.
- Following any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance.

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending the registered school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed in advance
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

Missing education

- Not registered at another school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school. This also applies for pupils who may have moved out of the area and school are unable to locate them. We will make every effort to locate an absent child and will refer into the Local Authority when a child meets the Child Missing Education criteria.

We do appreciate that there are occasions when there is a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we will deal with these sympathetically.

Holidays during term-time

One of Kemball School's priorities is raising pupils' levels of attainment and it is clear that improving attendance and reducing levels of persistent absence are most important factors in achieving this goal. This cannot be achieved without your co-operation and while we would like to thank you for the work you have already done we must ask for further support in this crucial area.

We are asking for your support by not taking holidays during term-time. Holidays in term time will not be authorised.

REMEMBER – The Law states that parents/carers **DO NOT** have an automatic right to take their child out of school in term-time.

Why shouldn't parents/carers take child out of school during term-time?

There is no substitute for the teaching that will be lost.

Your child will miss important key skills and may never catch up.

It may be helping your child to establish poor patterns of attendance.

It may put your child at a disadvantage by adding further barriers to their learning.

Absence will affect your children's level of engagement, assessments and results.

Absence may disrupt access to the specialist support needed by your child.

Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

The school day starts from 8.50am and registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will close at **9:30am**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time
- The afternoon register will close at **1.30pm**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- # = planned whole school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- S = Study leave

- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Traveller absence
- Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements or due to the pupil having to attend a school that does not qualify for travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live.
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity, with supervision being physically provided by an appropriately trained and knowledgeable person
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- W = Attending work experience
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law, despite the pupil being well enough to attend
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause, the nature of which must be documented by the school.
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code ‘#’ will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone before 8.45am on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent by text message as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school. This will happen before 10.30am. Parents/carers are expected to reply to the text message via phone call into the office or message on Class Dojo. If no response is received the office staff will make a follow up phone call during the first day of absence. This will happen after the closure of the afternoon register.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where there are concerns around a pupil's absence then school will undertake a home visit as a welfare check. Where a pupil is absent for 5 consecutive days class teachers will maintain regular contact and record these correspondences on Behaviour Watch.

In the case of persistent absence, letters will be sent home to parents and an attendance meeting will be arranged. This is also the case where there are concerns about a pupil's attendance.

Health-related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult, this will include reasonable adjustments and if necessary securing additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Meet with parents to discuss a reintegration plan including adaptations to care plans and risk assessments if necessary
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The Education Welfare Team

The Education Welfare Team has a legal responsibility to monitor school attendance on behalf of the LA. When there is concern about a child's attendance, the school will refer this to the Education Welfare Team. Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) will contact the parents and the child to discuss the absences and give help and support with any difficulties which may affect the child's attendance.

You may contact the Education Welfare Team yourself, for advice and support if you are concerned about your child's attendance.

Penalty notices and legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for parents to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

A fixed penalty notice will be issued in line with the LA's code of conduct and the DfE's ['Working together to improve school attendance'](#) guidance.

Penalty notices for unauthorised absences will be charged at £60, rising to £120 if not paid within 21 days.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Parents who are prosecuted and attend court because their child has not been attending school may be fined up to £1,000.

Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. Staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2025.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.